

**BLYTHEDALE
CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL**
Brightening the lives of children

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The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Clinton:

We are pleased to write this letter of support for the **Screening for Health of Infants and Newborns Act of 2006**. We commend you for your leadership in calling for a uniform and comprehensive national approach to screening newborns for the full panel of core conditions recommended by the American College of Medical Genetics and endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. If diagnosed early, these disorders, including metabolic and hearing deficiency, can be managed or treated to prevent severe consequences.

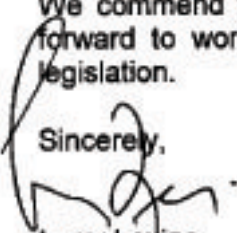
As a hospital which provides a wide array of services to children with special health care needs, we know how important early detection and treatment of conditions can be. We were particularly pleased to see the provisions of this legislation which provide for a Central Clearinghouse of current educational and family support information, critical to assuring a national standard of care.

According to the latest March of Dimes Newborn Screening Report Card, nearly two-thirds of all babies born in the United States this year will be screened for more than 20 life-threatening disorders. However, disparities in state newborn screening programs mean some babies will die or develop brain damage or other severe complications from these disorders because they are not identified in time for effective treatment.

At present, the United States lacks consistent national guidelines for newborn screening, and each state decides how many and which screening tests are required for every baby. As a result, only 9 percent of all babies are screened for all of the 29 recommended conditions. Clearly it is a wise investment to take full advantage of the information available to detect treatable conditions in children.

We commend you for your leadership on this most important issue and look forward to working with you and your colleagues to secure passage of this legislation.

Sincerely,


Larry Levine
President


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Vice Chair, Board of Trustees
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